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# Times Book On Viet Data Selling Fast

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"The Pentagon Papers" went on sale here yesterday with the government lining up as one of the biggest buyers of the once-secret documents.

The Pentagon and the CIA ordered nearly 100 copies of the paperback book, according to the Washington distributor and local book-sellers.

The publisher of the newspaper series originally printed in The New York Times said the Navy ordered 2,000 more books direct from the printing plant.

"It's only been on sale for a few hours and it's already in a league with 'The French Lieutenant's Woman' and 'The Gang That Couldn't Shoot Straight,'" said Ken Terhune of District News Co., the Washington-area distributor.

In New York, at the headquarters of the book's publisher, Bantam Books, Inc., there was even more enthusiasm. Brisk orders from Europe, especially West Germany, the publishing house said, are even outdistancing "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Sex," at least in English.

Trucks for the Washington distributor began picking up their first order of 12,500 copies at Dulles International Airport at 3 a.m. By midafternoon, Terhune said, they were all on the book-racks with another batch of 25,000 on the way.

"As far as a New York Times book goes," he said, "it's far better than anything we've ever handled."

The CIA ordered 25 copies direct from District News. Close to 1,000 more went on sale at shops in the Pentagon, including the newsstand where Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird's office asked for "about 20" copies and other defense agencies ordered some 30 more.

"It's really been quite remarkable," said Esther Margolis of Bantam Books, where executives had initially contemplated a first printing of 175,000. Instead, they settled on 500,000 and yesterday afternoon decided on a second printing of 50,000.

The first of the \$2.25 paperback editions began rolling off the presses at Bantam's Chicago plant only Wednesday night.

"Foreign interest," Miss Margolis said, "has been extraordinarily high. In West Germany, we got orders for 15,000. That's the highest ever for a Bantam book there, including 'Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Sex,' 'Valley of the Dolls,' and 'Portnoy's Complaint.'"

Stars and Stripes, she added, ordered 2,000 copies for sale at armed forces PX stores in Europe and the U.S. Information Agency put in for 250, presumably for its libraries around the world.

On the level of just plain readers, Terhune said that some of Washington's larger bookshops and department stores reported selling as many as 100 copies of the secret Vietnam war history within an hour or two.

But some were blasé. "It's just a compilation of articles from The New York Times," said a spokesman for the Soviet embassy. "I don't see the necessity of buying it now." Of the CIA's order, he said with a chuckle, "Maybe they have more money than we have."

There was also, Miss Margolis said, a strange silence from Saigon. "We have a distributor in South Vietnam," she reported, "but our export department cabled him yesterday for the third time. We haven't gotten any answer yet, which is sort of unusual."